Remarkable keyboard player, conductor, and scholar Christopher Hogwood died at his home in Cambridge on 24 September 2014. His musical and scholarly interests ranged from the Middle Ages to the Romantic era. Hogwood’s recorded legacy, perhaps the largest of any classical musician, helped bring the concept of historically informed performance to a wide audience. His Mozart recordings span the composer’s entire output: two operas (Die Entführung aus dem Serail and La clemenza di Tito) and numerous smaller vocal works; a selection of the church music including the Richard Maunder completion of the Requiem; keyboard music; and most of Mozart’s works for larger instrumental ensembles and for orchestra. Particularly notable are his set of Mozart’s symphonies and allied works with Jaap Schröder (71 works on nineteen compact discs) and his fascinating recordings of the complete piano concertos with soloist Robert Levin.

Many members of MSA fondly remember Chris as a friend and colleague.

Photo by Marco Borggreve
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Editor
Stephen C. Fisher
406 Greenbrier Ct
Fredericksburg VA 22401–5517
E-mail: sfisher1714@cox.net

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Edmund J. Goehring

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Mozart Society of America
℅ Megan Ross
The Department of Music
Hill Hall, CB# 3320
University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3320

Website
www.mozartsocietyofamerica.org
Website coordinator:
Alyson McLamore
Web manager:
Dwight Newton

Newsletter Art Director
Aniko Doman
aniko.doman@gmail.com

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2014
Marjorie Weston Emerson Award

The 2014 Emerson Award Committee consisted of Bertil van Boer, John Platoff (Chair) and Laurel Zeiss. At the presentation, Professor Platoff made the following remarks:

“This year’s award-winning article examines some of the young Mozart’s earliest compositions, two sets of sonatas for keyboard and violin, and it challenges many conventional notions about their origins and purpose, how their genre should be best understood, and even whether they are best thought of as ‘works’ or as ‘chamber music’ at all. The article combines first-rate historical and stylistic analysis—it is an original and provocative piece of musical scholarship.

“I am proud to announce that the 2014 Marjorie Weston Emerson Award goes to the article ‘Mozart’s Early Chamber Music with Keyboard: Traditions of Performance, Composition and Commodification,’ in the volume Mozart’s Chamber Music with Keyboard, edited by Martin Harlow and published by Cambridge University Press in 2012. The author is Nicholas Baragwanath.”

MSA Meeting
continued from front page

for talks on a wide range of topics that explore the lives and music of Mozart and his contemporaries in their domestic, courtly, ecclesiastical, and theatrical spheres. Proposals for short lecture-recitals and panels are also welcome. The conference will also include visits to the musical instruments collection at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts and to the Loeb Music Library at Harvard University.

Topics should be proposed in abstracts of up to 300 words and sent to the chair of the Program Committee, Jessica Waldoff [jwaldoff@holycross.edu], by 30 March 2015. The proposal should include all contact information and audio-visual needs. Only one submission per person will be considered. While MSA membership is not necessary for an initial proposal, membership is expected of all those who present papers at the conference.
From the President

Dear Members of the Mozart Society:

Here in the Boston area, we celebrated Mozart’s 259th birthday with a special gift from Mother Nature of over two feet of snow. Eine kleine Schaufelmusik, anyone? I hope the 27th of January was a pleasanter occasion for those members of the Society living in warmer climates!

2014 was a challenging year for our Society. The MSA Board took the necessary steps to leave Guild Associates, which served as our business office from 2006 to 2014, and we are under new management—our own! Going forward, the officers of the Society will run things with the expert assistance of Megan Ross, a graduate student at the University of North Carolina. It is our hope that members have experienced and will continue to experience these changes as seamless, but if you have any questions please send them along. Please note our new mailing address (listed below). Please note also some changes on the website, including the addition of an option to pay by PayPal.

In this issue of the Newsletter, you will find important information about upcoming activities: abstracts for the papers to be included on our annual session at ASECS, chaired this year by Laurel Zeiss and featuring papers by Bertil van Boer, Sarah Everly, Edmund Goehrung, and Martin Neubald; and a call for papers for our upcoming sixth MSA biennial conference at Tufts University, “Mozart and His Contemporaries.” September is a beautiful time of year in New England and Tufts is close to Boston and Cambridge (which are easily accessible by public transportation). The conference will include opportunities to visit the instrument collection at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Mozart holdings in the Loeb Music Library at Harvard University. The program committee is looking forward to reading your proposals and sending out more details about the conference as soon as we have a finalized schedule of events. In the interim, please don’t hesitate to get in touch (jwaldoff@holycross.edu) with questions or suggestions.

2014 was also a year of loss. We pay tribute in this issue of the Newsletter to two members of the Mozart community who passed away in 2014: Bruce Cooper Clark and Christopher Hogwood. Bruce Cooper Clarke was a valued and long-time member of the MSA. On a personal note, he was the very first person to write to me when I was elected president. It is an honor to have such a fitting tribute to him by Volkmar Braunbehrens in this issue of the Newsletter. Christopher Hogwood is a figure so well known from his 200 plus recordings and many editions and publications that we may all feel as if we knew him. Many members of our Society did know him well as a friend and a colleague.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank many members of the Board and the Society who have been enormously generous in donating their time and energy: John Platoff, Bertil van Boer, and Laurel Zeiss, who served on this year’s Awards Committee; Bruce Alan Brown and Edmund Goehrung, who made arrangements for our panel at the Mostly Mozart Festival in Lincoln Center; Joanne Kopp (of the American Musical Instruments Society), Paul Corneilson, Suzanne Forsberg, and Jane Hettrick, who were an invaluable support to me as we set up our own business office; Megan Ross, who is doing a wonderful job in her first few months as our business coordinator; Lisa de Alwis, Chair of the Membership Committee; Bruce Alan Brown, Paul Corneilson, and Kathryn Libin, the members of the program committee for the 2015 conference; Alessandra Campana, who is our wonderful host and benefactor at Tufts University; Steve Fisher, editor of our fine Newsletter; and all the members of the Board and our Committees.

To all of you who have paid dues and/or made additional contributions, I’d also like to take this opportunity to say thank you. Your support makes it possible to print and distribute the Newsletter, maintain the website, program activities and plan conferences, and to pursue new initiatives and relationships. If you have not yet paid dues for 2014-2015, perhaps you will take this opportunity to renew your membership.

As I like to say, we are a small society with an important mission!

With best wishes,
Jessica Waldoff
President

Mozart Society of America
Object and Goals

Object
The object of the Society shall be the encouragement and advancement of studies and research about the life, works, historical context, and reception of Wolfgang Amadé Mozart, as well as the dissemination of information about study and performance of related music.

Goals

1. Provide a forum for communication among scholars (mostly but not exclusively American); encourage new ideas about research concerning Mozart and the late eighteenth century.

2. Present reviews of new publications, recordings, and unusual performances, and information about dissertations.

3. Support educational projects dealing with Mozart and the eighteenth-century context.

4. Announce events—symposia, festivals, concerts—local, regional, and national.

5. Report on work and activities in other parts of the world.

6. Encourage interdisciplinary scholarship by establishing connections with such organizations as the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

7. Serve as a central clearing house for information about Mozart materials in the Americas.
Dexter Edge and David Black have launched a valuable new website, **Mozart: New Documents**, https://sites.google.com/site/mozartdocuments/home. Ultimately it will present over 120 documents relating to Mozart that have been discovered since the most recent addendum to Otto Erich Deutsch’s work in 1997. While new items continue to turn up via conventional methods, many of these documents have been located through the expanded search opportunities made possible by large-scale digitization projects such as Google Books. Among the highlights are new reports of the premieres of *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *La clemenza di Tito* and of a previously unknown concert given by Mozart in 1787 and a name-day serenade in Vienna in 1789 featuring Mozart’s “newest symphonies.” Over seventy documents dating from 1760 to 1792 are already up on the site, which presents them in facsimile with transcription and commentary.


This issue is appearing nearly six months late; there will be an issue in the spring and it will be back on schedule by August. The Editor wishes to apologize for this, but would like to seize upon the teachable moment to remind members of MSA that this is your newsletter, and all of you should consider contributing to it. Short articles presenting new Mozart research of interest to the non-specialist and reviews of materials related to Mozart—new editions, audio and video recordings, books, significant performances—are always welcome. The Newsletter strives to present work by a mix of established Mozart scholars and others: younger scholars including students, and lovers of Mozart in other fields who can bring us expertise and perspectives from outside our usual boundaries. The Editor welcomes all inquiries.
Bruce Cooper Clarke left us on 5 October 2014 at the age of 88. For the community of Mozart scholars scattered around the world this was an irreplaceable loss. No one understood so well as he how to initiate contacts, how to bring scholars into dialogue with each other, how to create a network of correspondents or to how bring issues to the attention of the proper individuals. He was a quiet but highly successful diplomat, always oriented toward the practical concerns at hand, with no interest in publicity or self-promotion.

These were the hallmarks of an individual who preferred to stay out of the public eye, an outlook that made Clarke valuable and effective in his profession. A member of a distinguished military family, he served in the United States Navy in World War II, then went on to serve in the OSS and later the CIA. His posts included head of the permanent U.S. delegation to the disarmament conference in Vienna (Secretary of Defense’s Representative for MBFR [Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction]), and by his retirement in 1981, Deputy Director of Intelligence.

After retirement Clarke was able to devote himself entirely to Mozart research, as author and especially as mediator. He was in close contact with many scholars of his generation, including Alan Tyson, Stanley Sadie, Peter Branscombe, and Paul Badura-Skoda, and brought to their attention important work by younger scholars, particularly in Germany and Austria. He not only translated numerous studies but saw to their circulation in America and the English-speaking world. In his old age he translated the first two volumes of Anton Neumayr’s monumental Musik und Medizin (Music and Medicine, 1–2, Bloomington: Medi-Ed Press, 1994 and 1997).

Shortly before the 200th anniversary of Mozart’s death in 1991 Clarke founded “The Prince Lichnowsky Newsletter,” a small periodical for his circle of friends that presented and promoted the discussion of new Mozartiana. In 2005 this evolved into the website “Apropos Mozart,” which made it possible for him to make new findings available all over the world, most often in his own translations. It received remarkably positive responses in places from Finland to South America.

Clarke also used the newsletter and website to publish a series of valuable studies on Mozart’s biography and guides to his works. The material he wrote or translated all showed the same approach: it was down-to-earth and well documented, presenting a portrait of Mozart free from Romantic idealization, baseless speculation, and popular mythology. He did not care for fine but empty words but rather for clear historical reality, engagement with sources and documents, and especially for provocative findings that upset formerly held conclusions. At the same time he strove (in the best Anglo-Saxon and American tradition) to make his writing clear to all and to make his points only through his argumentation. He had little use for musicological jargon, which is still too common in Europe. Notably, in “Apropos Mozart” he showed an interest in books for younger readers that presented a realistic portrait of Mozart.

Bruce Cooper Clarke was a highly educated and refined individual who viewed the world with skepticism and yet with the greatest attention. He avoided public view and left few traces on the Internet—he does not appear in Wikipedia. Of Irish background, he embodied the best East Coast tradition, conservative but fair, curious, and open to the world. His charm allowed him to make friends easily, and in his quiet way he was the truest and most reliable friend one could imagine—as I know from more than 25 years of sharing not only our common interest in Mozart but also our private sorrows and joys.

We have lost a great friend. But we will treasure his friendship and go onward in accordance with his generous spirit.

—Volkmar Braunbehrens (Freiburg im Breisgau)
English version by SCF

To this recollection by a friend and colleague it should be added that Clarke was an early and important supporter of the Mozart Society of America. His substantial financial assistance helped with the Society’s founding and he remained keenly interested in its development, though he did (characteristically if regretfully) decline to share with us his reminiscences of his friend H. C. Robbins Landon after his death in 2009. The Apropos Mozart website is unfortunately not active at present.
Eighteenth-Century Views of Mozart and his Music: Mozart Society of America Session at ASECS 2015

As in past years, MSA will present a paper session at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies; the 2015 meeting will be held in Los Angeles on 19–22 March. The ASECS website is http://asecs.press.jhu.edu. The 2015 session, chaired by Laurel E. Zeiss of Baylor University, will explore how well and in what contexts Mozart was known in his mature years.

Mozart and the Moravians: Mozart Reception in Transatlantic Context

Sarah Eyerly, Florida State University

Beginning in the 1730s, members of the German-Moravian church established communities across the Atlantic world. From Pennsylvania, New York, and North Carolina, to England, St. Thomas, Suriname, and the West African coast, Moravians carried with them their unique form of evangelical Christianity and, perhaps most importantly, the cultural traditions of the German-speaking world, including vocal and instrumental art music. Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century visitors to Moravian communities often noted that Moravians performed sophisticated and thoroughly modern instrumental and vocal works in worship services and other sacred contexts. Moravians believed that music, rather than spoken language, could most powerfully convey theological truths, and approached their spirituality principally through music. With little separation between the sacred and secular, all musical activities, even the performance of secular art music, became religious pursuits.

While much of the art music performed in Moravian communities was composed by the Moravians themselves, a significant number of pieces were musical borrowings, retexted contrafacta by well-known composers such as Haydn, Mozart, and Graun. Mozart’s motet “Ave verum corpus” was a popular choice, given its already existing Christian context. However, the sacred retexting of secular scenes from operas such as Così fan tutte (“Secondeate, auretete amiche/Deinem Heiland, Zion preis”) and Die Zauberflöte (“Bei Männern, welche Liebe fühlen/Schallt unsere Dankes frohe Lieder”) was also quite common. Interestingly, late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century archival records from Moravian communities demonstrate that the Moravians were adapting Mozart’s operas within ten years of their premières. Through a sophisticated network of port facilities on each side of the Atlantic, as well as privately-owned transport ships, including the SS Harmony and SS Irene, Moravians imported the latest musical manuscripts, instruments, and European-trained composers and musicians to the far reaches of the Atlantic world.

This paper will explore the ways that Mozart’s works were circulated, adapted, and performed in Moravian communities across the Atlantic world. For what purposes and in what contexts did the Moravians repurpose Mozart? What kinds of inter-textual and inter-musical meanings can be gleaned from these contrafacta? Who heard and performed these works in mission communities, such as the Mohican and Delaware communities in Pennsylvania and New York? What inter-cultural or cross-cultural meanings did Mozart contrafacta have for German-born Moravians, as well as native musicians and audiences? What can these contrafacta teach us about the transatlantic reception and performance of Mozart’s works in general? For the Moravians, transference of music and instruments to each mission community allowed missionaries and native-born congregants alike to experience the musical culture of the German-speaking world even on the peripheries of the West Indies, the coast of North Africa, or the wildlands of Pennsylvania. In the words of one Moravian source, congregants were to feel “every where at Home.”

A Tale of Two Cities: Introduction and Reception of Mozart in Stockholm and New York during the 1790s

Bertil van Boer
Western Washington University

In 1785 Carl Friedrich Cramer published in his Dillentantarien an article by Christian G. Neefe in which this composer and teacher of Beethoven expressed his opinion on the top contemporary composers. Joseph Haydn was at the top of the exclusive list, but also included were composers such as Rosetti, Pleyel, Kraus, and Wolfgang Amadé Mozart. Although Mozart was well known and regarded across Europe while a prodigy, the spread of his fame outside the Holy Roman Empire as an adult seems less clear, especially if he was regarded by Neefe (and others) as one of the leading composers of the period. This paper takes two case studies from cities on the periphery of Europe where Mozart’s music was introduced in two different ways. It explores Mozart within the vibrant cultural world of Gustavian Sweden, where its Kapellmeister Kraus (also named on the list) became according to Gösta Morin “a passionate Mozartean,” resulting in Mozart’s permanent introduction into both the symphonic and eventually the operatic repertory in Scandinavia. As a contrast, Mozart’s music in the nascent United States was introduced in a less obvious manner, with the insertion of his music into the public concerts by way of the ubiquitous Medley Overture by James Hewitt. In both instances, the introductions paved the way for Mozart’s inclusion in the early 19th-century repertory.
Between the Court and the Suburbs: Die Zauberflöte’s Aesthetic Background and Early Viennese Reception in View of the Opera’s 1801 Hoftheater Production

Martin Nedbal
University of Arkansas

In 1801, the Viennese Hoftheater prepared the first production of Die Zauberflöte in Vienna outside Schikaneder’s Wiednertheater. Most pre-existing operas performed by the Hoftheater Singspiel troupe throughout the late 1700s and early 1800s were altered to fit the company’s intense preoccupation with moral education and “good taste.” However, as the archival materials associated with the 1801 production show, the alterations to Die Zauberflöte were minimal compared to Hoftheater adaptations of other pre-existing works (e.g., Achmet und Almenzine). Unlike these imported works, and unlike most suburban operas, Die Zauberflöte avoided sexual humor and depictions of adultery, thus resembling the German-language works originally written for the imperial stage (e.g., Das unterbrochene Opferfest).

This paper argues that Die Zauberflöte’s approach to public morality resulted from Mozart’s own aesthetic preferences and his earlier cooperation with the Hoftheater’s German company on Die Entführung aus dem Serail. Since adjusting Die Zauberflöte to the Hoftheater’s morality standards was unnecessary, the few alterations executed in 1801 instead reflected the fierce competition between the court and suburban companies; by ostentatiously changing the text in a few famous arias, the Hoftheater personnel stressed the purportedly low quality of Schikaneder’s libretto and the superiority of their own production. The 1801 production therefore illustrates that although Die Zauberflöte was originally produced at a suburban stage, it had close ties to the German-language repertoire of the high-minded Hoftheater.

Pleasure and Virtue in Early Mozart Reception

Edmund J. Goehring
University of Western Ontario

Whether the pleasures of art could also redound to virtue was a pressing topic in aesthetics and criticism during Mozart’s day. The matter was especially vexed for music and drama, which were thought to project supra-ordinary sensuous charms that could beguile the unawary. Adding further authority to skepticism about the moral efficacy of those arts was Kant, who, along with arguing that a true man of taste, one possessing a “beautiful soul,” would flee the vanities of art for the beauties of nature, also maintained that music offered little more than an agreeable play of sensations.

Although often not cited as a source, that Kantian idea carries considerable weight in modern and modernist Mozart art criticism and historiography. Either Mozart’s charms must be resisted because they are false, or set aside as irrelevant because their yield is “mere” pleasure rather than something instructive. Yet to many music critics in the last decades of the eighteenth century, Kant’s separation was irksome. Sometimes, the resistance was explicit, as in the counterclaim that the true initiate understands that “the engagement with music is never as with a craft: a mere diversion or empty play of senses.” The more fascinating response, however, is also the most paradoxical one. Some followers of Kant would, in the name of Kant, affirm a harmony embracing music’s pleasures and its virtues, and the work they found exemplifying it—one that “solved all aesthetic problems of musical composition,” as one biographer maintained—was The Magic Flute.

MSA at Mostly Mozart 2014

As it had in 2013, this last summer the Mozart Society of America presented a panel of papers and discussion at the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center in New York City. A program committee consisting of current MSA President Jessica Waldoff, Vice President Paul Cornelison, former President Kathryn Libin, and Board member Bruce Alan Brown solicited proposals from MSA members on “Mozart and the Promise of Opera”—a theme broad enough to accommodate quite different approaches, but also suggestive of the special place that Mozart’s operas occupy in Western civilization. The panel, moderated by Bruce Brown, took place on the afternoon of Saturday, 16 August, before an overflow crowd consisting in large part of persons staying for that evening’s concert by the Mozart Society Orchestra.

In the first paper, “The 1940s Mozart Revival at the Metropolitan Opera House,” [printed elsewhere in this issue] Christopher Lynch recounted the performance histories of Mozart’s operas at the Met during the early 20th century and the strategies by which the company sought to associate them (the comedies in particular) with Broadway musicals and their high production values. The topic was one that resonated strongly with New York audience members, many of whose questions touched on performance practice. Reactions to the following two papers, Steven N. Machtinger’s “Harem Scare ’Em: Operatic Idealism versus Empirical Reality” and Edmund J. Goehring’s “Mozart, the Theatrical Self, and the Generous Stage” centered largely on the strikingly paradoxes within and between the two topics. Machtinger discussed an exchange of anti-Semitic comments by Mozart and his father about a Viennese scandal involving a Jewish court official and social acquaintance of the young composer, just as Die Entführung aus dem Serail, with its Enlightenment message of toleration, was coming to the stage; Goehring described ways in which Mozart’s Viennese operas participated in Emperor Joseph’s strategy of harnessing theater and opera for the moral improvement of his subjects, in stark contrast to prevailing anti-theatrical prejudices. The discussion period yielded numerous insightful questions and comments, but was hardly sufficient to resolve the contradictions the papers had brought up!

The panel’s organizers and the MSA would like to thank Kate Monaghan and the Mostly Mozart staff for their help in preparing and hosting the event. There is a good chance of another such panel being organized for 2016, which is the 50th anniversary of Mostly Mozart.
When Wolfgang Amadé Mozart traveled to Paris via Mannheim in 1777 he had his violin and several of his violin concertos in his luggage. But already in Augsburg he had become acquainted with extraordinary keyboard instruments by makers such as Späth and Stein, and sent home enthusiastic letters about the advantages of the new fortepiano. In a letter of 7 February 1778 he declared that “the keyboard is only a side issue of mine, but luckily a very strong one.” However, toward the end of the journey his attitude had totally changed. When he finally realized that all efforts to obtain a new position abroad had failed, Mozart reluctantly returned to his home town: “There is only one thing I request in Salzburg, namely that I be no longer a violinist as I used to be—I no longer want to serve as a violin player; I want to conduct from the keyboard” (11 September 1778). But he did not feel that he had reached his goal until he left the position of organist at Salzburg cathedral to settle as a freelance composer and performer in Vienna. On 9 June 1781 he emphatically wrote to his father in a letter from Vienna: “Here is truly the land of the keyboard.” Around this time he must have acquired his concert instrument, a fortepiano by Anton Gabriel Walter, which is now one of the highlights in the Tanzmeistersaal of the Mozart residence in Salzburg.

During his early Viennese years Mozart gained legendary fame as a performer-composer; his subscription series of concerts, regularly featuring him at the piano, were well attended, and a Salzburg journalist told Leopold in 1785: “It is really astonishing what a great number of works your son is currently publishing. In all musical advertisements I do not read anything else but: ‘what a great number of works your son is currently publishing. . .’” The composer profited from a boom of music publishing. In a letter of 7 February 1778 he declared that “the keyboard is only a side issue of mine, but luckily a very strong one.” However, toward the end of the journey his attitude had totally changed. When he finally realized that all efforts to obtain a new position abroad had failed, Mozart reluctantly returned to his home town: “There is only one thing I request in Salzburg, namely that I be no longer a violinist as I used to be—I no longer want to serve as a violin player; I want to conduct from the keyboard” (11 September 1778). But he did not feel that he had reached his goal until he left the position of organist at Salzburg cathedral to settle as a freelance composer and performer in Vienna. On 9 June 1781 he emphatically wrote to his father in a letter from Vienna: “Here is truly the land of the keyboard.” Around this time he must have acquired his concert instrument, a fortepiano by Anton Gabriel Walter, which is now one of the highlights in the Tanzmeistersaal of the Mozart residence in Salzburg.

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have acquired the four-page autograph as a keepsake, and the precious manuscript plausibly came to the National Széchényi Library from the collection of the aristocratic family in question.

The apparent loss of the autograph led scholars to speculate about possible engraving errors in the first edition. A remarkable lesson from the autograph is that in almost all suspicious cases the original print agrees with the autograph, while significant differences are found in spots hitherto regarded as rather unequivocal. In measures 5 and 6 of Variation 5 the last beat consists of two thirty-second notes, one sixteenth note and a sixteenth rest. These add up to more than an eight. Later issues of the print regularize all values to thirty-seconds; the autograph shows that in the originally print actually a beam is missing and that the three notes—to charming effect—should be played as two sixty-fourth notes and a thirty-second note respectively. In the third measure of the minuet the original print has an a” as the highest pitch while the corresponding measure in the recapitulation has a c#”; in later imprints of the first edition this inconsistency was eliminated by giving c#” already in measure 3. In the autograph the repeat of the opening measures is not fully written out (“Da Capo 7 Tact”) and, therefore, there is no doubt that the composer indeed intended a’” as the highest pitch in both measures 3 and 33.

The rediscovery of the autograph bifolio in Budapest will thus have impact on how this sonata will be performed and received in the future. For most music-lovers the differences are hardly recognizable when listening to the sonata in the concert-room; but all professionals who have memorized this extraordinary piece will have to adjust their reading of the musical text. Yet, the missing bifolio (pages 1, 2, 7, and 8) of the autograph still hides some secrets; for example, should the slurs in the Siciliano rhythms of the variation theme extend over two or three notes? Did the uncommon tempo indication “All[e]grino,” later replaced by “Allegretto,” originate in Mozart’s autograph?

The fortuitous discovery allows us now to combine the Salzburg leaf with the Budapest portion of the autograph manuscript of one of Mozart’s most famous keyboard works. Since a copy of the first imprint of the 1784 original edition from the Hoboken collection in Vienna could also be used for this edition, musical amateurs, as well as professional performers and scholars, have the rare opportunity to see Mozart’s own handwriting and a contemporary printed edition side by side.

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Mozart Between Modernism and Humanism

Edmund J. Goehring

To what extent does academia shape the culture about us, and to what extent is academia shaped by that culture? That question has some urgency for me as I consider a set of values that have guided much scholarly thought about Mozart over the last generation. Are such values so esoteric that only other academics would care to debate them, or do they touch or even come from our lives outside those walls?

Before I try to put a name to these values, I’d like to unroll a list of various instances of them, to see if any are recognizable to you. Here goes. Perhaps you’ve seen a performance of a Mozart opera like Figaro or Cosi where the happy ending doesn’t look happy: the Count and Countess seem unreconciled, the reunited lovers in Cosi look anything like happily reunited. The director seems to prize an interpretation that alienates over one that absorbs. Moving from the stage to the art museum, perhaps you’ve run across a description of a painting which explains that the work before you is exposing the illusion of its art—what we see before us is, fundamentally, paint spread out on canvas. Over in the lecture hall, you might have heard a talk on Mozart which stressed his labor and adherence to convention at the expense of his genius and originality, or maybe you have read of appeals to the science of psychology to explain, to set out the physical causes of, Mozart’s creativity. All Mozart had—all we have—are brains that function almost outside our control, and not minds and selves that aspire, that fret, that rejoice, that despair, that wonder, and from that complex inner life choose to act. Perhaps you’ve heard not only that God is dead, but that authors are, too, that the romance of the autonomous self celebrated in literature is just that—a romance, in which case, art can now mean whatever you want it to mean. During a recent visit to a museum, I overheard a docent give just such an explanation of a perplexing painting. I regret not having intervened, for I might have pulled a couple of straying souls out of art-historical purgatory. I could have saved them from an appreciation of art that, as the jingle goes, lets you have it your way. This makes for a pretty big pile of items, but I think there is something that holds everything together: a set of values I’ll call modernist. I take this use from T. J. Clark’s remarkable Farewell to an Idea, in which he describes modernist art as a phenomenon that “turns on the impossibility of transcendence.” “Turns on the impossibility of transcendence.” Clark, at least at the beginning, is simply identifying an idea around which he thinks a body of art coheres. As an entryway into Mozart’s music, however, this modernist perspective prompts the armchair analytical philosopher in me to interject, “wait, what does transcendence mean when it comes to denying it in Mozart?” One reply is that Mozart’s art stays in this world and doesn’t look beyond, much less transport us there. But what does that mean, not only on its own terms, but historically? After all, Mozart lived in a nation that was, or at least tried to be, Enlightened, Catholic, and Austrian, all at once. When Maria Theresa and Joseph II were trying to reform religious abuses, it was all to advance a purer piety in the populace, not to undermine respect for religion. Where

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Mozart revisionists direct most of their energies, however, is to the nineteenth century. A modernist, secular, nontranscendent Mozart is what is discovered once the accretion of Romantic myth and anecdote has been stripped away. A modernist Mozart is a demythologized Mozart. The pyramids of Egypt, so the idea runs, inspire awe only until we get close enough to inspect them. In this case, Mozart is like a pyramid.

If you’ve gotten the sense that I wonder how well these values articulate our experience of Mozart’s music, I should hasten to add that there have been good reasons why people have adopted them. There is a lot of nonsense out there about Mozart, and one of the ways academia serves the world is by going about the patient, arduous work of straightening out that crooked record. Mozart did make some money; he wasn’t always neglected (although the public often found his music difficult, and you can’t blame it for that); he sometimes struggled with composition (although not always); Salieri didn’t murder him. But, in rightly seeking to remove the soot of legend and fabrication, does the modernist Mozart musicologist also strip away what Marilynne Robinson called the old arts of civilization?

Possibly, or, at least, I’d like to propose an alternate set of values—humanist values—that I think are superior to modernist ones, superior because they can show us more, including what is exemplary and irreducible in human conduct and achievement. A humanist appraisal of Mozart would hesitate to accept key modernist tenets when it comes to things like the writing of history. The past, we are told, is no longer accessible to us, even by dint of labor or imagination, and the efflorescence of human creativity exemplified in Mozart can be satisfactorily traced to material or economic cause. Mozart wrote for the sole purpose of making money, so the argument runs.

The real casualty in this relation of individual artistic achievement to history is the quality that drew most of us to Mozart’s music in the first place: its beauty. Here, aesthetic experience—our appreciation of beauty—is seen as a screen thrown up between us and the world (as opposed to a way of seeing the world more completely). The idea that beauty is deceitful may seem baffling to you. In defense of that distrust, we should be reminded that it’s far older than modernism. Think of Odysseus voyaging past the island of the Sirens as a cautionary allegory about the treachery of beauty. Beauty can distract and imperil, and sometimes we have to stop our ears to its sounds and close our eyes to its images.

But that’s hardly all that can be said about beauty. John Dewey has this amazing argument in Art as Experience that art museums are in a sense expressions of cultural failure. They are failures whenever they suggest that a pleasure in the surface of things takes us away from our everyday lives, when, in truth, a feeling for beauty informs our everyday lives. Any of the New Yorkers among you knows about the silence that suddenly steals over you when entering into Gramercy Park, or what it’s like to contemplate one of Manhattan’s grand avenues, where you see the globe arc off but the line continue into eternity.

The humanist recognizes that it is the irresistible (and perilous) beauty of Mozart’s music that has allowed it to survive the flood of time to be discovered and prized on distant shores.

Something about that music is not lost in the past; it is part of our vital present. The main reason we’re interested in knowing more about the world of Mozart (or Beethoven or Raphael or Austin or Melville …) is that the surface, the art, the manner, the style, all of that draws us in even when the content and context have become more opaque for us. Of course, it can be perfectly feasible for a particular historical study to suspend that fact, depending on what your aim is, but it is not one we should lose sight of.

If you’re interested in more of where these humanist ideas come from, either to enjoy them more deeply or to marshal arguments to damn them, I could propose a reading list from Kant’s Third Critique to Charles Rosen’s Classical Style. But to close, one can hardly do better than Jacques Barzun. In the essay Clio and the Doctors, he likens history to “a vast river’’ that propels log, vegetation, rafts, and debris; it is full of live and dead things, some destined for resurrection; it mingles many waters and holds in solution invisible substances stolen from distant soils. Anything may become part of it; that is why it can be an image of the continuity of mankind. And it is also why some of its freight turns up again in the social sciences: they were constructed out of the contents of history in the same way as houses in medieval Rome were made out of stones taken from the Coliseum. But the special sciences based on sorted facts cannot be mistaken for rivers flowing in time and full of persons and events. They are systems fashioned with concepts, numbers, and abstract relations. For history, the reward of eluding method is to escape abstraction.

Barzun is calling for a humanist history that does not look downward to diagnoses, that does not try to reduce a thing to a type. It looks outward, to what is individual, to what resists paraphrase.

To try to sum this all up in a rather overdramatic metaphor: If the Mozart enthusiasts among us want to imagine ourselves as Aeneases on quests to found Rome, whatever Rome may mean for us, then the kind of history and values I’m speaking of would have us climb out of the gloomy underworld of causes and diagnoses and mechanisms to venture out into the diaphanous, sun-lit world of reasons and understanding and connections.
Throughout much of the nineteenth century, Mozart’s operas did not inhabit the “sacred” place in the international repertoire that they do today. Outside of Germany, opera companies only occasionally produced his works—usually Le nozze di Figaro, Don Giovanni, and Die Zauberflöte—and only in heavily revised form.1 This began to change in the 1890s, when internationally renowned conductors like Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler championed the Mozart Revival, exerting a global influence that would eventually establish Mozart’s operas in the canon. According to scholar Leon Botstein, this revival emerged from the perception that “a new model and source of inspiration was needed as an antidote to the musical aesthetics associated with Wagner and his followers.”2 But the Mozart Revival soon combined with other issues. For example, the regular performance of the operas at the Salzburg Festival beginning in the 1920s became a nationalistic celebration of Austrian pride,3 and the Glyndebourne Festival carved out its niche in the opera world by dedicating its first four seasons, beginning in 1934, exclusively to Mozart’s operas.4 The unique reasons that led the Metropolitan Opera House to bring the movement across the Atlantic in the late 1930s, however, remain under-studied.

Since the Met’s opening in 1883, Don Giovanni had been the only opera of Mozart’s to attain repertoire status. Le Nozze di Figaro, Die Zauberflöte, and Così fan tutte had been seen on the Metropolitan’s stage, but only as occasional novelties. Given the international attention that Glyndebourne’s productions drew, one might expect for the festival to have heavily influenced the Metropolitan’s productions of Le nozze di Figaro in 1939, Die Zauberflöte in 1941, and Die Entführung aus dem Serail in 1947. But no conductors, directors, or designers were shared, and only one singer—Australian baritone John Brownlee—reprised a Mozartean role from Glyndebourne. To be sure, the Metropolitan tapped into the international excitement that Salzburg and Glyndebourne had created, but the productions themselves seem to have been mostly shaped by more local factors. Indeed, the Metropolitan’s turn to Mozart stemmed from the company’s competition with the increasing amount of serious operatic works

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Above: Figure 1. Die Zauberflöte, Act 1, Scene 2 (1941) Metropolitan Opera Association
on Broadway, and the management’s perceived need to reach out to new audiences.

This need extended from a financial crisis that threatened the Metropolitan’s future. In the midst of the Great Depression, the institution turned to public fund drives to support the 1933–34 and 1934–35 seasons. It was not until the 1935–36 season, which was underwritten by the Juilliard Foundation, that financial stability was at last achieved. Moreover, competition with Broadway stemmed from the fact that many blamed the Metropolitan’s struggles on the company’s failure to keep apace of developments in the popular theater. In 1933 critic Irving Kolodin complained that at the Metropolitan audiences were greeted by “the antique stage, the ugly and tasteless sets, the unimaginative lighting, [and] the vast spaces which discourage any but the most rudimentary dramatic effects.” This, he made clear, was not what audiences found in the popular theater, arguing that if opera were mounted at Radio City Music Hall “the imaginative vigor of our native designers could achieve the results which they are accustomed to accomplish, as a matter of course, in the despised ‘commercial’ theatre.” One year later Kolodin railed, “There is no question that it would be to the advantage of the situation in New York for the public to be Metropolitan Opera-less for a year or two; for in that way there would certainly be provided the impetus for a new and vigorous organization.” The stage was set, so to speak, for the exploration of opera at new institutions.

Such an exploration commenced on Broadway in 1934 with Virgil Thomson’s *Four Saints in Three Acts*. George Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* followed the next year, initiating a long line of works that combined the foxtrots, syncopated rhythms, and 32-bar song forms of musical comedy with the conventions of grand opera, including serious and tragic plots, extended musical scenes, and the use of leitmotifs, recitative, and ensemble numbers. The resulting works lay somewhere “between the two genres,” as Kurt Weill put it when publicizing *Johnny Johnson* (1936), his first operatic work in the American popular theater. Over a decade later, Weill looked back on the operatic Broadway works that followed *Johnny Johnson*, claiming that his own *Lady in

Revival

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Above: Figure 2. *Die Zauberflöte*, Act 2, Scene 6 (1941) Metropolitan Opera Association
the Dark (1940), a revival of Porgy and Bess (1941), and Oscar Hammerstein’s Carmen Jones (1943) had paved the way for his “Broadway opera” Street Scene (1947). Musicologist Kim Kowalke, moreover, has pointed out that Street Scene in turn provided the impetus behind many other Broadway operas, including Gian Carlo Menotti’s The Telephone (1949), The Medium (1949), The Consul (1950), and The Saint of Bleecker Street (1954). These serious musical dramas, which were typically lavishly produced and fluidly directed in the Broadway manner, redefined operatic production, forcing the Metropolitan to adapt to the new techniques.

In 1935 the Metropolitan’s Board of Directors hired a new general manager, Edward Johnson, to address the company’s issues. In early 1936, still in his first season, Johnson publically expressed his desire to change the Metropolitan’s approach to opera production by adopting a theatrical style like that found on Broadway. He acknowledged that Broadway and film had shaped his target audience’s expectations and he shifted the opera production by adopting a theatrical style like that found on Broadway. He acknowledged that Broadway and film had shaped his target audience’s expectations and he shifted the Metropolitan’s marketing rhetoric away from simply emphasizing star singers:

> Our new audience does not know how much it knows. Its experience has been so extensive that rigorous standards have been absorbed, sometimes unconsciously. The theatre and, particularly, the screen have idealized stage people, and the opera must do its best to conform to these ideals. … A singer must be able, above all else, to sing. But the first thing people do at the opera is to see, not to hear, and if they are inexperienced in listening they may be distracted easily by bad stage pictures. The result may be that the singer will not get a chance.

Therefore, from the beginning of his tenure Johnson emphasized that the Metropolitan would produce works that balanced the visual and dramatic style of Broadway with the vocal excellence for which the company was known in order to reach the “inexperienced” listener.

In a letter dated May 25, 1940, Johnson revealed that he saw Mozart’s operas as particularly suited for competing with Broadway. Responding to Thayer Cumings, a wealthy businessman who had pressed him about the possibility of producing Porgy and Bess, Johnson wrote that Gershwin’s opera was simply too theatrical to produce at the Old Met. He wrote, “Our theatre consumes sound and we hesitate even to do anything but the most dramatic of the Mozart operas here” (emphasis added). To Johnson, therefore, Porgy and Bess and Mozart’s operas were similarly theatrical, and Mozart’s “most dramatic” operas—presumably the Singspiele—were on his mind when contemplating how to reach out to those who enjoyed Broadway shows.

A little more than 18 months after he penned this letter, Johnson’s first Mozart Singspiel, Die Zauberflöte, premiered on December 11, 1941, and Die Entführung aus dem Serail followed nearly five years later, premiering on November 29, 1946. Consistent with Broadway, both productions were performed in new English translations written by Ruth and Thomas Martin, and Johnson engaged designers that turned the operas into visual spectacles. Richard Rychtarik designed Die Zauberflöte, mesmerizing the audience with a plethora of abstract forms and bright colors. As seen in figure 1, for example, in act 1, scene 2, Monostatos held Pamina captive in a room with a beautiful window in the appealing shape of a slightly distended seashell, presenting Pamina, perhaps, as the pearl within. In act 2, scene 6, moreover, audiences could sympathize with Pamina, who, believing Tamino no longer loves her, sings “Ach, ich fühl’s,” and while their ears were titillated by Jarmila Novotna’s vocal prowess, the beautiful curvilinear shapes and symmetries created by the branches and landscape guided their eyes from one end of the stage to the other (figure 2). The designs, according to critic Howard Taubman, achieved Johnson’s goal of improving the scenery, for the critic enjoyed the opera’s “freshness of design,” particularly in light of the Metropolitan’s other sets, which, he wrote, “can be garish.”

For Entführung, Donald Oenslager drew on his nearly two decades of experience designing shows in the popular theater. He had designed musical comedies like Gershwin’s Girl Crazy (1930) and Cole Porter’s Anything Goes (1934), as well as operettas like Sigmund Romberg’s The New Moon (1928), and works that contained operatic passages like Weill’s Johnny Johnson. Known for providing audiences with visually stimulating designs, his set for Entführung presented a kind of Orientalist fantasy of the East as a dreamy and exotic land, depicted through the almost cartoon-like quality of the walls and landscape in the background, and the clouds that might look more natural on a Persian rug (figure 3). When reviewing the work, Virgil Thomson critiqued the Orientalism of the sets: “Chinese, Indian, Persian and near-East motifs have been assembled into an oriental amalgam that lacks the wit to justify such an eclectical procedure.” Clearly Oenslager’s aim was not authenticity, but to create sets that were as visually captivating as Broadway’s, and by these standards, he succeeded. Thomson praised their “new and very shiny” qualities.

While production photos allow us to see the sets today, the only insight into the stage direction comes from written accounts. Such accounts, however, suggest that the stage action aimed to capture the fluidity of the Broadway stage. Herbert Graf, who directed the new Mozart productions, had long been vocal about what he saw as the opera house’s need to adapt to the techniques of Broadway and film. Graf credited “the technique of motion pictures” for the rise of the stage director in the opera house, claiming, “From these arose the demand that dramatic credibility—accepted as a necessity on the [Broadway] stage—should advance to the opera as well,” and he argued that the opera house could no longer rely on “stock operatic gestures.” Instead, he continued, “all gestures and movement must be lifelike and in character.” Graf’s productions, therefore, responded to developments in film and on the stage by using visuals and movement “to create a scenic unity harmonizing the action and the music.”

Contemporaneous criticism suggests that Graf strove for this in the Mozart productions. When the direction was favorable, discussion was notably brief. Reviewing Die Zauberflöte, for example, Taubman merely claimed that “Mr. Graf gave the production pace and variety.” Taking issue with the direction in Entführung, on the other hand, Olin Downes provided the most insight into the stage movement. He critiqued Graf’s direction as “mannered” and “fussy and superfluous” because it “did not add to the movement of the drama.” He wrote, “It may be asked why Osmin, picking figs in the Pasha’s garden, should have to be continued on page 14
separated from the interrogating Belmonte by a high garden wall; why Constanza should sing the pathetic air [“Traurigkeit”] ... , and then, while the orchestra is playing its long ritornello, there should be a whole change of scenery, and Constanze singing its Bravura antithesis [“Martern aller Arten”] from the lower level." Downes’ account suggests that Graf filled the stage with so much movement and action that much of it was unmotivated by the drama, but the director’s aims appear clear: to appeal to audience expectations—shaped by Broadway productions—for action and movement on the stage.

To conclude, general manager Edward Johnson saw Mozart’s operas as theatrical and therefore suitable for Broadway production techniques, which he employed to appease an audience that had grown to expect such techniques in the theater. Two of the three new productions were successful: *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Die Zauberflöte* became regular items in the Metropolitan’s repertoire. *Entführung*, however, flopped. It was only performed five times in the 1946–47 season, and was not revived until a new production by John Dexter premiered in October 1979.

All of these productions succeeded, however, in furthering the Mozart Revival by creating increased excitement around Mozart’s operas that allowed them to become regular items in the international operatic repertoire. In a sense, then, the Mozart operas of today owe a small debt to Broadway for forcing Johnson to reconsider the Metropolitan’s methods of opera production, and to Johnson, who believed Mozart’s operas to be ideally suited for experimentation with Broadway techniques.


11. Edward Johnson to Thayer Cumings, May 25, 1940 (Metropolitan Opera Archives, Edward Johnson Correspondence, 1940–1941, Folder C).


15. Taubman, “Magic Flute.”

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